BOOK REVIEWS

Sylvan Ramsey Kaufman and Wallace Kaufman. 2007. **Invasive Plants: Guide to Identification and the Impacts and Control of Common North American Species.** (ISBN 978-0-8117-3365-6, pbk). Stackpole Books, 5067 Ritter Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.stackpolebooks.com, orders@stackpolebooks.com, 717-796-0411, 717-796-0412 fax). $39.95, 458 pp., 503 color photos, 8 1/4" × 5 1/2".

Touted as "the first-ever field guide to invasive plants in North America", this book is a thoughtful compendium of over 150 invasive plant species of the U.S. and Canada and the larger issue of invasive species impact and control. The first 36 pages provide an adequate overview of the topic, touching on what it means to be invasive, the fine line between "exotic" and "pest", and the colored history of both passive invaders and those species originally sought for their ecological benefits. Suggestions are provided for various management and control strategies, including mechanical, biological, and chemical methods, and are later revisited relative to each individual species. All instructions are clear and concise, as is the overview of common herbicides, their use, and their potential dangers. Natural or eco-friendly herbicides are not mentioned.

The book segues from introductory material in Part I to species descriptions in Part II by way of a "step-by-step guide in the familiar biology key format", which, though technically accurate, is hard to follow and would benefit from some stylistic clarification (e.g., bullets, numbers, letters). The individual species descriptions themselves, however, are a wonderful payoff. Each plant is depicted in at least one color photograph, along with the specific epithet, various common names, family name, and any hybridizing species or species for which the plant may be mistaken. In addition, the authors provide details for distinguishing morphological features, habitat, and range, as well as notes on the plant's ecological impacts and historical journey from its homeland to North America. Species-specific management tips and a short list of references are also provided for each plant, with special mention for sources that are available online. The book concludes with an annotated bibliography of 25 articles, books, and websites, a photo credits section, and an index of categories from the identification key, Latin names, and common names. A great resource for both scientist and layperson, I wholeheartedly recommend this book.—*M. Brooke Byerley, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4060, U.S.A.*

Oscar F. Clarke, Danielle Svehla, Greg Ballmer, and Arlee Montalvo. 2007. **Flora of the Santa Ana River and Environs: With References to World Botany.** (ISBN 978-1-59714-050-8, pbk.). Heyday Books, P.O. Box 9145, Berkeley, CA 94709, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.heydaybooks.com). $29.95, 496 pp., 3200 images and illustrations, 6" × 9".

Casual observers of the botanical world and experts alike, located both within and outside of the Santa Ana River watershed, will enjoy and learn from this exciting new book. The authors go well beyond the typical plant guidebook by not only describing over 1,000 species that are known to occur along the Santa Ana River and its environs, but by also providing an excellent backdrop to the river and the ecology of its associated plant community. As noted by the authors, the Santa Ana River is one of the largest rivers lying wholly within Southern California, with dynamic plant communities found in three major segments: alluvial scrub segment, inland valley segment, and coastal/estuarine segment.

The most impressive characteristic of this book is its focus on comparative botany and the evolutionary relationships among plant species. The guide to the flora of the Santa Ana River is organized on this basis and, therefore, provides essential context for developing a greater understanding of the plant species that goes beyond plant identification. Further, it is this very focus that makes the book so broadly applicable to all levels of expertise and to individuals interested in botany that do not necessarily reside within the Santa Ana River watershed. For those that do live within the Santa Ana River watershed, this book serves as an excellent guidebook for identifying and developing a greater appreciation for and understanding of species along the river and its surrounding environment. While the species accounts are generally brief, they center on plant features useful in identification and include detailed photographs and illustrations to visually highlight these key features. To assist the reader in understanding botanical terminology, the authors have also included a "Botany Basics" section and glossary. Keys to assist the reader in using the guidebook for identification purposes are also supplied.

Also of note are the numerous summary tables throughout the book spotlighting family and genera characteristics, including Appendix 2—"Family Character Tables." These summary tables, as well as the authors' look at world phylogeny in Appendix 5 are very useful and support the broad applicability of this book. This book is sure to not only increase one's understanding of the flora of the Santa Ana River, but will most certainly lead to a better appreciation for and desire to conserve plant species around the world.—*Melinda McCoy, Herbarium Volunteer, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4060, U.S.A.*